

## Railroad Retirement Board

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mailed to the debtor that his or her request for waiver of recovery has been wholly or partially denied if the debtor requested waiver of recovery within the prescribed time limit; however, regardless of when the debt is paid, no interest may be charged for any period prior to the end of the period within which the debtor may request waiver of recovery or, if such request is made, for any period prior to the date on which notice was mailed to the debtor that his or her request for waiver of recovery has been wholly or partially denied;

(iii) When, in the situations described in paragraphs (g)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section, the debt is paid within any extension of the thirty-day period granted by the Board;

(iv) With respect to any portion of the debt which is paid within the time limits described in paragraphs (g)(1)(i), (g)(1)(ii), or (g)(1)(iii) of this section; or

(v) In regard to any debt the recovery of which is waived.

(2) The Board may waive the collection of interest, penalties and administrative costs in whole or in part in the following circumstances:

(i) Where, in the judgment of the Board, collecting interest, penalty and administrative costs would be against equity and good conscience; or

(ii) Where, in the judgment of the Board, collecting interest, penalty and administrative costs would not be in the best interest of the United States.

(h)(1) In making determinations as to when the collection of interest, penalty and administrative costs is against equity and good conscience the Board will consider evidence on the following factors:

(i) The fault of the overpaid individual in causing the underlying overpayment; and

(ii) Whether the overpaid individual in reliance on the incorrect payment relinquished a valuable right or changed his or her position for the worse.

(2) In rendering a determination as to when the collection of interest, penalties and administrative costs is not in the best interest of the United States the Board will consider the following factors:

(i) Whether the collection of interest, penalties and administrative costs would result in the debt never being repaid; and

(ii) Whether the collection of interest, penalties and administrative costs would cause undue hardship.

(i) The Board shall waive the collection of interest, penalties, and administrative costs in any case where the debt to be recovered is being recovered by full or partial withholding of a current annuity payable under the Railroad Retirement Act and the debt was not incurred through fraud.

[52 FR 41559, Oct. 29, 1987, as amended at 59 FR 15049, Mar. 31, 1994; 67 FR 5723, Feb. 7, 2002]

### **§ 200.8 Disclosure of information obtained in the administration of the Railroad Retirement Act and the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.**

(a) *Purpose and scope.* The purpose of this section is to establish specific procedures necessary for compliance with section 12(d) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, which is incorporated into the Railroad Retirement Act by section 7(b)(3) of that Act. Except as otherwise indicated in this section, these regulations apply to all information obtained by the Railroad Retirement Board in connection with the administration of the Railroad Retirement Act and the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.

(b) *Definitions—Agency.* The term *agency* refers to the Railroad Retirement Board, an independent agency in the executive branch of the United States Government.

*Applicant.* The term *applicant* means a person who signs an application for an annuity or lump-sum payment or unemployment benefits or sickness benefits for himself or herself or for some other person.

*Beneficiary.* The term *beneficiary* refers to an individual to whom a benefit is payable under either the Railroad Retirement Act or the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.

*Board.* The term *Board* refers to the three-member governing body of the Railroad Retirement Board.

*Document.* The term *document* includes correspondence, applications,

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claims, reports, records, memoranda and any other materials or data used, prepared, received or transmitted to, from, by or for the agency in connection with the administration of the Railroad Retirement Act or the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.

*Information.* The term *information* means any non-medical document or data which is obtained by the agency in the administration of the Railroad Retirement Act and/or the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act. *Information* does not include the fact of entitlement to or the amount of a benefit under either of these Acts. Medical records are subject to the disclosure provisions set out in § 200.5(e) of this part.

*Testify and testimony.* The terms *testify* and *testimony* include both in-person oral statements before a court or a legislative or administrative body and statements made in the form of depositions, interrogatories, declarations, affidavits or other means of formal participation in such proceedings.

(c) *General rule.* Except as otherwise authorized by this section, information shall not be produced, disclosed, delivered or open to inspection in any manner revealing the identity of an employee, applicant or beneficiary unless the Board or its authorized designee finds that such production, disclosure, delivery, or inspection is clearly in furtherance of the interest of the employee, applicant or beneficiary or of the estate of such employee, applicant, or beneficiary. Where no such finding is made, no information shall be released except in accordance with the provisions of § 200.5 of this part, unless release of such information is required by a law determined to supersede this general rule. In addition, regardless of whether or not such finding can be made, information which is compiled in anticipation of a civil or criminal action or proceeding against an applicant or beneficiary may not be released under this general rule.

(d) *Subpoenas—statement of policy and general rule.* (1) It is the policy of the Board to provide information, data, and records to non-Federal litigants to the same extent and in the same manner that they are available to the general public. The availability of Board

employees to testify before state and local courts and administrative and legislative bodies, as well as in Federal court and administrative proceedings which involve non-Federal litigants, concerning information acquired in the course of performing their official duties or because of the employee's official capacity, is governed by the Board's policy of maintaining strict impartiality with respect to private litigants and minimizing the disruption of an employee's official duties. Thus, the Board may refuse to make an employee available for testimony under this paragraph or paragraph (e) or (f) of this section if it determines that the information sought is available other than through testimony and where making such employee available would cause disruption of agency operations. However, this paragraph does not apply to any civil or criminal proceeding where the United States, the Railroad Retirement Board, or any other Federal agency is a party; to Congressional requests or subpoenas for testimony; to consultative services and technical assistance provided by the Board or the agency in carrying out its normal program activities; to employees serving as expert witnesses in connection with professional and consultative services rendered as approved outside activities (in cases where employees are providing such outside services, they must state for the record that the testimony represents their own views and does not necessarily represent the official position of the agency); or to employees making appearances in their private capacity in legal or administrative proceedings that do not relate to the official business of the agency (such as cases arising out of traffic accidents, crimes, domestic relations, etc.) and not involving professional and consultative services as described above.

(2) No officer, agent, or employee of the agency is authorized to accept or receive service of subpoenas, summons, or other judicial process addressed to the Board or to the agency except as the Board may from time to time delegate such authority by power of attorney. The Board has issued such power of attorney to the Deputy General

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Counsel of the agency and to no one else.

(3) In the event the production, disclosure, or delivery of any information is called for on behalf of the United States or the agency, such information shall be produced, disclosed, or delivered only upon and pursuant to the advice of the Deputy General Counsel.

(4) When any member, officer, agent, or employee of the agency is served with a subpoena to produce, disclose, deliver, or furnish any information, he or she shall immediately notify the Deputy General Counsel of the fact of the service of such subpoena. Unless otherwise ordered by the Deputy General Counsel or his or her designee, he or she shall appear in response to the subpoena and respectfully decline to produce, disclose, deliver, or furnish the information, basing such refusal upon the authority of this section.

(e) *Subpoena duces tecum.* (1) When any document is sought from the agency by a subpoena duces tecum or other judicial order issued to the agency by a court of competent jurisdiction in a proceeding wherein such document is relevant, a copy of such document, certified by the Secretary to the Board to be a true copy, may be produced, disclosed, or delivered by the agency if, in the judgment of the Board or its designee, such production is clearly in furtherance of the interest of the employee, applicant, or beneficiary to whom the document pertains, or is clearly in furtherance of the interest of the estate of such employee, applicant, or beneficiary, and such document does not consist of or include a report of medical information.

(2) When the production, disclosure, or delivery of any document described in paragraph (e)(1) of this section would not be permitted under the standards therein set forth, no member, officer, agent, or employee of the agency shall make any disclosure of or testify with respect to such document.

(f) *Requests for voluntary testimony.* All requests for testimony by a Board employee in his or her official capacity must be in writing and directed to the Deputy General Counsel. They shall state the nature of the requested testimony, why the information is not available by any other means, and the

reasons, if any, why the testimony would be in the interest of the Board or the Federal government.

(g) *Authorized release of information.* Subject to the limitation expressed in paragraph (h) of this section, disclosure of documents and information is hereby authorized, in such manner as the Board may by instructions prescribe, in the following cases:

(1) To any employer, employee, applicant, or prospective applicant for an annuity or death benefit under the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974, or his or her duly authorized representative, as to matters directly concerning such employer, employee, applicant, or prospective applicant in connection with the administration of such Act.

(2) To any employer, employee, applicant or prospective applicant for benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, or his or her duly authorized representative, as to matters directly concerning such employer, employee, applicant, or prospective applicant in connection with the administration of such Act.

(3) To any officer or employee of the United States lawfully charged with the administration of the Railroad Retirement Tax Act, the Social Security Act, or acts or executive orders administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for the purpose of the administration of those Acts only.

(4) To any applicant or prospective applicant for death benefits or accrued annuities under the Railroad Retirement Act, or to his or her duly authorized representative, as to the amount payable as such death benefits or accrued annuities, and the name of the person or persons determined by the agency to be the beneficiary, or beneficiaries, thereof, if such applicant or prospective applicant purports to have a valid reason for believing himself or herself to be, in whole or in part, the beneficiary thereof.

(5) To any officer or employee of the United States lawfully charged with the administration of any Federal law concerning taxes imposed with respect to amounts payable under the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 and the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act and the name of the person or persons to whom such amount was payable.

(6) To any officer or employee of any state of the United States lawfully charged with the administration of any law of such state concerning unemployment compensation, as to the amounts payable to payees or beneficiaries under the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 and the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act.

(7) To any court of competent jurisdiction in which proceedings are pending which relate to the care of the person or estate of an incompetent individual, as to amounts payable under the Railroad Retirement Act to such incompetent individual, but only for the purpose of such proceedings.

(8) To parties involved in litigation, including an action with respect to child support, alimony, or marital property, the amount of any actual or estimated benefit payable under the Railroad Retirement Act or the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, where such amount or estimated amount is relevant to that litigation.

(9) To any employer, as to the monthly amount of any retirement annuity under the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 or benefit under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act to which a present or former employee of that employer is entitled.

(10) To any governmental welfare agency, information about the receipt of benefits and eligibility for benefits.

(11) To any law enforcement agency, information necessary to investigate or prosecute criminal activity in connection with claims for benefits under the Railroad Retirement Act, Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, or any other Act the Board may be authorized to administer.

(12) To any consular official, other than a consular officer of a country to which United States Treasury checks and warrants may not be sent, acting in behalf of a compatriot who has claimed benefits under the Railroad Retirement Act or Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, information that is pertinent to the claim and that the applicant himself could have upon his or her own request.

(h) No document and no information acquired solely by reason of any agreement, arrangement, contract, or request by or on behalf of the agency, re-

lating to the gathering, preparation, receipt or transmittal of documents or information to, from or for the agency, which is by virtue of such agreement, arrangement, contract, or request in the possession of any person other than an employee of the agency, shall be produced, reproduced, or duplicated, disclosed or delivered by any person to any other person or tribunal (other than the agency or an employee thereof, or the person to whom the document or information pertains), whether in response to a subpoena or otherwise, except with the consent of the Board or its designee. Any person, upon receipt of any request, subpoena, or order calling for the production, disclosure, or delivery of such document or information shall notify the Board or its designee of the request, subpoena, or order and shall take no further action except upon advice of the Board or its designee. Unless consent of the Board or its designee is given, the person shall respectfully decline to comply with the request, subpoena or order.

(i) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, no disclosure of information may be made by the Board or any member, officer, agent, or employee of the agency, if the disclosure of such information is prohibited by law.

(j) The Deputy General Counsel or his designee will request the assistance of the Department of Justice where necessary to represent the interests of the agency and its employees under this section.

[54 FR 43055, Oct. 20, 1989, as amended at 56 FR 50247, Oct. 4, 1991; 63 FR 2141, Jan. 14, 1998]

#### § 200.9 Selection of members of Actuarial Advisory Committee.

(a) *Introduction.* Under section 15(f) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 (45 U.S.C. 231n(f)), the Board is directed to select two actuaries to serve on an Actuarial Advisory Committee. This section describes how the two actuaries are selected.

(b) *Carrier actuary.* One member of the Actuarial Advisory Committee shall be selected by recommendations made by "carrier representatives," "Carrier representatives," as used in